

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

House Meets At...	Votes Predicted At...
10:00 a.m. For Legislative Business	Last Vote: Evening
Fifteen "One-minutes" Per Side	

Any anticipated Member absences for votes this week should be reported to the Office of the Majority Whip at 226-3210.

Floor Schedule and Procedure

- **H. Res. 813-Rule providing for consideration of the Conference Report on H.R. 1429-Head Start for School Readiness Act (Rep. Castor-Rules)**: Debate on the rule will be managed by Rep. Castor, and consideration will proceed as follows:
 - One hour of debate on the rule.
 - Possible vote on a Democratic motion to move the previous question. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on the previous question.**
 - Vote on adoption of the rule. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on adoption of the rule.**
- **Conference Report on H.R. 1429 - Head Start for School Readiness Act (Rep. Kildee – Education and Labor)**: Debate on the Conference Report will be managed by Education and Labor Committee Chair Rep. George Miller, or his designee, and will proceed as follows:
 - One hour of debate on the Conference Report.
 - Possible republican motion to recommit.
 - Vote on adoption of the Conference Report.
- **H. Res. 818–Rule providing for consideration of H.R. 4156 Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008 (Rep. McGovern–Rules)**: The closed rule provides two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. The rule provides one motion to recommit the bill. Debate on the rule will be managed by Rep. McGovern, and consideration will proceed as follows:
 - One hour of debate on the rule.
 - Possible vote on a Democratic motion to move the previous question. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on the previous question.**

- Vote on adoption of the rule. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on adoption of the rule.**
- **H.R. 4156 Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008 (Appropriations):** Pursuant to the rule, debate on the bill will be managed by Appropriations Committee Chair Rep. David Obey, or his designee, and will proceed as follows:
 - Two hours of debate on the bill.
 - Possible Republican Motion to Recommit the Bill.
 - Vote on passage of the bill. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on passage of the bill.**
- **Motion to go to conference on H.R. 1585 - National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Rep. Skelton – Armed Services).**
- **Possible Republican Motion to Instruct Conferees:** If a Motion is offered, debate will be managed by Armed Services Committee Chair Rep. Ike Skelton and will proceed as follows:
 - One hour of debate on the Motion to Instruct Conferees.
 - Vote on adoption of the Motion to Instruct Conferees.
- **H. Res. 817–rule providing for consideration of H.R. 3074-Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008(Rep. Arcuri–Rules):** The conference report rule waives all points of order against the conference report on H.R. 3074 and against its consideration and provides that the conference report shall be considered as read. Debate on the rule will be managed by Rep. Arcuri, and consideration will proceed as follows:
 - One hour of debate on the rule.
 - Possible vote on a Democratic motion to move the previous question. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on the previous question.**
 - Vote on adoption of the rule. **Democrats are urged to vote yes on adoption of the rule.**
- **Conference report to accompany H.R. 3074-Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008(Rep. Oliver–Appropriations):** Debate on the Conference Report will be managed by Appropriations Committee Chair Rep. David Obey, or his designee, and will proceed as follows:
 - One hour of debate on the Conference Report.
 - Possible republican motion to recommit.
 - Vote on adoption of the Conference Report.

- **Postponed Suspension Votes:** At some point today, the House will take votes on the following bills which were debated on Tuesday:
 1. **H.Res. 812** - Expressing condolences to the people affected by the recent serious flooding in Mexico (*Rep. Linda Sanchez - Foreign Affairs*)
 2. **H.R. 3320** - Support for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews Act of 2007 (*Rep. Smith (NJ) – Foreign Affairs*)
 3. **H.Res. 811** - Condemning the November 6, 2007 terrorist bombing in Afghanistan and expressing condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of the Wolesi Jirga (*Rep. Price (NC) – Foreign Affairs*)
 4. **H.R. 3845** - PROTECT Our Children Act of 2007 (*Rep. Wasserman Schultz – Judiciary*)
 5. **H.R. 719** - Keeping the Internet Devoid of Sexual Predators Act of 2007 (*Rep. Pomeroy – Judiciary*)
 6. **H.R. 4120** - Effective Child Pornography Prosecution Act (*Rep. Boyda – Judiciary*)
 7. **H.R. 4136** - The Enhancing the Effective Prosecution of Child Pornography Act of 2007 (*Rep. Carney – Judiciary*)

Summary and Key Issues

H.R. 1429 - Head Start for School Readiness Act

Head Start has been the premiere early childhood education program in the U.S. for more than 40 years. It has served more than 20 million children and families in that time, and it remains a cornerstone in this country's efforts to close the achievement gap, combat poverty, and provide all Americans with the opportunity to thrive. The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 will reinvigorate Head Start and help more children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed. The bipartisan legislation improves teacher and classroom quality, strengthens Head Start's focus on school readiness, expands access to Head Start for more children, ensures that centers are well-run, boosts coordination between Head Start and state and local programs, and improves comprehensive services that help children by helping their families.

Improving teacher and classroom quality

- Improves teacher qualifications: Half of teachers nationwide will have a bachelor's degree by 2013.
- Targets new funding toward improving teacher salaries and supporting professional development.
- Implements a classroom observation tool that will improve teaching practices.

- Ensures that classroom staff members receive better training to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
- Requires programs to develop career ladders and annual professional development plans for full-time staff.

Strengthening focus on school readiness

- Requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to reevaluate and update the current early learning standards and use of assessments with the best available research into child development.
- Requires the use of best practices to support children's emerging literacy and vocabulary skills.
- Terminates further use of an inappropriate and ineffective testing regime for 4-year-olds – a regime known as the National Reporting System.
- Increases funding to help more programs operate full day and year-round.
- Aligns Head Start performance standards with State early learning standards.

Ensuring access to Head Start for more children

- Provides greater flexibility to serve children whose family income is just above the federal poverty line (up to 130 percent of the poverty line), while ensuring that serving the neediest children remains the program's top priority.
- Authorizes total funding of \$7.35 billion for fiscal year 2008, \$7.65 billion for fiscal year 2009, and \$7.99 billion for fiscal year 2010 and "such sums" thereafter – allowing tens of thousands more children access to the program.
- Prioritizes expansion for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start and Indian Head Start.
- Prioritizes expansion for Early Head Start, which serves children from birth to age three, so more children can receive Head Start during the critical development years when their brains are growing the fastest.
- Ensures more participation of homeless children by removing barriers to their enrollment.
- Enhances opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in Head Start programs.
- Allows programs to convert preschool slots to serve children from birth through age three.

Ensuring that Head Start centers are well-run, effective, and fairly governed

- Requires programs failing to provide a high quality early education program to re-compete for their grant using an application review process developed by an expert panel that will consider multiple measures of program performance.
- Allows the Secretary of Health and Human Services to take funding quickly away from bad programs.
- Strengthens the monitoring of programs by improving the quality of the review team, requiring inclusion of a detailed fiscal management protocol, and requiring follow-up site visits of deficient programs.
- Requires the active participation of the governing board at each agency and defines the board's responsibilities and authority; prohibits persons with a conflict of interest from serving on the board.

- Ensures that parents have a strong voice in how Head Start centers are run.

Boosting coordination between Head Start and other programs for children

- Improves coordination between Head Start and local early education programs to better meet the needs of working families.
- Strengthens Head Start's linkages with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act and with state health services, mental health services, and family services.
- Increases coordination with state pre-k programs so that resources and planning efforts are shared and efficiencies are gained to better serve families in the community.
- Strengthens the State Head Start collaboration offices to promote better coordination between Head Start programs and other State and local early childhood services.
- Provides funds for State Advisory Councils to enhance early childhood program quality and coordination.

Strengthening comprehensive services for families of Head Start children

- Places greater emphasis on early identification of child and family mental health needs, including maternal depression, and on directing families to appropriate services.
- Requires programs to implement research-based best practices for family service workers and targets quality improvement dollars to decrease family service worker caseloads.

H.R. 4156 – Orderly and Responsible Iraq Redeployment Appropriations Act, 2008

- Requires the redeployment of US troops from Iraq to begin within 30 days of enactment, with a target for completion of December 15, 2008;
- Requires a transition in the mission of US forces in Iraq from primarily combat to: force protection and diplomatic protection; limited support to Iraqi security forces; and targeted counterterrorism operations;
- Prohibits deployment of any troops not fully equipped and trained; waivable with a presidential national security certification;
- Extends to all US government agencies and personnel the limitations in the Army Field Manual on permissible interrogation techniques;
- Provides \$50 billion to meet the needs of the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan but defers the consideration of the remainder of the President's nearly \$200 billion request.

HIGHLIGHTS: 2008 TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS

As Approved by Conferees

Conference Report Total	Discretionary Total	Budget Authority
2007 Enacted:	\$47.5 billion	\$100 billion
President's Request:	\$47.9 billion	\$100.3 billion

The Transportation and Housing conference report addresses the important challenges of keeping our transportation system safe and strong, ensuring that every American has adequate shelter, and doing so in a way that strengthens the economy and is environmentally responsible.

Department of Transportation, \$105.6 billion in total budget authority, \$7.1 billion above 2007, and \$5.3 billion more than the President's request. \$50.981 billion in discretionary budget authority, \$3.0 billion above the President's request and \$4.3 billion over 2007.

The conference report invests:

- \$40 billion in the nation's highway system for construction of new roads, repairs and improvements;
- \$1 billion to address deficient bridges across America – accepting Senator Patty Murray's amendment for a 25 percent boost to bridge funding – following the I-35 collapse;
- \$195 million in emergency funds to complete Federal investment in the reconstruction of the I-35 bridge;
- Sufficient funds to renew all current housing vouchers, and provides 15,500 new vouchers for veterans, the disabled, and low income families;
- A 500 % increase in funds to alleviate problems caused by the sub-prime mortgage crisis by providing housing counseling to help homeowners stay in their homes;
- \$3.5 billion for airport efficiency, modernization and safety grants;
- \$1.45 billion for Amtrak;
- \$110 million to provide access to air travel in rural communities; and
- Over \$85 million to improve pipeline and rail safety.

Quote of the Day

"The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on" – Walter Lippmann

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